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APPROVAL OF UNDP ASSISTANCE TO A PROJECT OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC REGION

IPF:(1992-96) $29 500 000
(RAS/91/G31) - South Pacific Biodiversity Conservation Programme

Date of approval by the AC:[1]	27 January 1993
Expected duration:	Five years
Proposed executing agency:	Government
Government implementing agency:	South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP)
Proposed UNDP contribution:	$ 9 491 500 Source of funds: GEF
Previous UNDP contribution (PA):	$ 508 500
Total UNDP budget:	$10 000 000

Project background

The South Pacific is characterized with extremely fragile near-shore and on land ecosystems, which contain a very significant variety of unique species and biological diversity. The region is though to have the world's highest proportion of endemic species per unit of land area or human inhabitant. Many species are increasingly endangered due to the mounting pressure of population growth and ecologically unsustainable development activities. Loss of species and unrestorable disruption of the small island ecosystem, which include near-shore marine areas, coral reefs, mangrove swamps, coastal plains and watershed areas will not only result in the loss of essential natural resources and environment on which the predominantly subsistent life of the Pacific people is much dependent; but also will have major long-term impact on the marine ecosystem and biodiversity of the Pacific Ocean at large.

The conservation of biodiversity in the Pacific calls for unique approaches, where the majority of the land and near-shore areas is privately owned by local clans and communities. The customary land ownership is at the base of the life in the Pacific. The people and the community should, therefore, be one of the foremost subjects of conservation efforts. They need to become aware of the importance of maintaining the conservation of their natural asset in balance with the development requirement; and support should be provided for building and strengthening the capacity to manage this process for their long-term welfare and survival.

Description of project

The project will protect the biological diversity of 15 Pacific island states by facilitating the establishment of a series of diverse Conservation Areas (CAs) in which there are agreed criteria for development based on long-term ecological sustainability. The

[1] This Fact Sheet reflects the status of the project/revision at the time it was approved by the Action Committee; modifications to the project/revision may have occurred subsequently.

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distinction from a national park or reserve concept lies in the recognition of, and positive response to the need for communities to continue to use their environment for their subsistence and economic well-being. Hence, while the primary goal of the programme is the conservation of biodiversity, an important focus for each CA will be the improvement of the economic and social well-being of local communities through sustainable development.

In each of the CAs, development activities and practices to minimize the impact on endangered species and their ecosystems will be promoted at the community level, through an in-country Conservation Area Project (CAP), to be implemented and managed by community-linked Conservation Area Coordination Committee (CACC). This regional programme will provide carefully planned, extensive in-country support in the form of consultation with local groups, awareness raising, strengthening of local NGOs and governments, further scientific and technical assessment, participatory design of the CAP, initial management support of the CA and others. The process will be reviewed and appraised at various stages, e.g. initial CA proposal, the establishment of CACC, draft CAP document and the CA inception by a Technical and Management Advisory Group (TMAG). TMAG will endorse individual CA proposals and CAPS, and advise on the next steps as well as on broader programme management issues. There will also be a range of ancillary activities related to individual CAPs to support protection of rare or threatened species, improve the local awareness of the importance on biodiversity conservation, and develop educational and training activities and materials.

Approximately 20 CAs will be identified, established and initially managed. In these and the adjacent areas, communities and the people will be motivated to progressively adopt improved production practices and/or alternative income earning activities, reinforced by conducive measures for human development, to ensure ecological sustainability of the CA. The capacity to sustain, manage and develop the CA will be in place in the local CACC, NGO and the Government. The regional programme will play a central coordination role among regional and country biodiversity related activities supported by various donors, and will cooperate with sectoral programmes in fisheries, forestry, agriculture, water resources, education, small industry, rural development and poverty alleviation, especially those under the UNDP country and sub-regional programmes. Aside from a regional biodiversity conference to be sponsored by the programme, to promote an ongoing mechanism for information/data exchange and creation of a regional biodiversity database, collaborative support of CAs and CAPs will be worked out.

Inputs

UNDP will provide 48 man-months for a programme manager, 45 man-months each for two programme officers, six man-months for a species conservation officer, 162 man-months of support services; 400 man-months for in-country support; subcontracts BL to support in-country CAs and CAPs; research/technical, developmental training and managerial work; equipment; and miscellaneous costs.

Financial data

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Personnel	2 868 600
Subcontract	5 642 700
Training	776 800
Equipment	101 400
Miscellaneous	610 500
Total	10 000 000

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